A

SERMON

Preached before the

Honourable House of COMMONS.

Veneris, 31 *die Januarii*, 1752.

Ordered,

THAT the thanks of this Houſe be given to the Reverend Doctor *Cradock*, for the ſermon by him preached Yeſterday before this Houſe, at *Saint Margaret's*, *Weſtminſter*; and that he be deſired to print the ſame; and that the Lord *Carysfort*, and the Lord *Burghley*, do acquaint him therewith.

J. DYSON, *Cl. Dom. Com.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

694. f. 4.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

Honourable HOUSE of COMMONS,

AT

St. *Margaret's*, *Weſtminſter*,

On *Thurſday*, *Jan.* 30. 1752.

Being the Anniverſary of the MARTYRDOM of King CHARLES I.

By *JOHN CRADOCK*, D. D.

Fellow of St. *John's College*, *Cambridge*; and Rector of *Thornhaugh*, *Northamptonſhire*.

LONDON:

Printed for CHARLES BATHURST, in *Fleetſtreet*; and ſold by R. DODSLEY, in *Pall-mall*; W. MEADOWS, in *Cornhill*; and W. THURLBOURN, in *Cambridge*.

M.DCC.LII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SERMON

Preached before the

Honourable House of COMMONS.

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1 PET. II. 16.

As free, and not uſing your *liberty for a cloke of maliciouſneſs, but as the ſervants of God.*

THE direction here given to the *Chriſtians* diſperſed throughout the eaſt, concerning their conduct towards civil governors, aptly enough points out to us the meaſure of that obedience; which is due from the members of a well-formed community, to thoſe with whom the laws have intruſted the executive power of ſuch body.—Upon which account the words, as they lie before us, afford a ſubject very properly adapted to the ſolemnity of *this day's* inſtitution; by which we are naturally referred to a period of our hiſtory, in which, tho' encroachments were attempted to be made upon the rights of the people; (for that ſuch were at leaſt attempted, the concurrent teſtimony of that age leaves us no room to diſavow;) yet it is not, at this time eſpecially, to be paſſed over; that the meaſures which were *then* taken to repel thoſe attacks, were ſuch as not only had a tendency to overturn the foundation of all civil government, but ſuch likewiſe as in the end actually

did

did ſubvert the ancient eſtabliſhment of this nation; and plainly diſcovered, that many of thoſe who at firſt engaged in, and all who afterwards went through with them, made their pretenſions to liberty only a cloke for deſigns of a very black and unjuſtifiable nature; and, upon the whole, that they acted rather from intereſted and wicked views, than from principles of freedom, and a veneration for the conſtitution.

HOW far this repreſentation of the ſtate of things is conformable to truth and fact; perhaps will beſt appear, if we employ our thoughts in ſome inquiry into the *nature* and *end* of *civil government*, and particularly into the *conſtitution* of *our own country*; from whence we ſhall be able to form a judgment, how far either the *one* or the *other* was affected, by the proceedings of thoſe men, and of thoſe times, that brought on the complicated troubles of this day.

However mankind have differed in their notions, as to the true ground of civil eſtabliſhments, and the ſeparate rights of prince and people; (and there is ſcarce any thing within the ſphere of human inquiry, about which they have been more divided;) yet even this difference ſeems to have ariſen, not ſo much from obſcurity, or intricacy in the ſubject itſelf, as from partial and intereſted views; by which the application of particular perſons hath been too often directed to a favourite point: The opinions of ſome appear manifeſtly to have imbibed a tincture from natural temper, the impreſſions of education, or the byaſs of party: Whilſt thoſe of others have taken their colour and complexion from the countries where they lived, or the turn and circumſtances of the times in which they wrote: For which reaſon our beſt and cleareſt notions in this, as in other

other ſpeculative points, are to be fetched neither from the ſophiſtry of ſchools, nor the refinement of courts; but from the general conſtitution of human nature, and the ordinary occurrences of common life.

It is very obſervable, that there is implanted in our nature an inclination and propenſity to converſe and aſſociate with thoſe of the ſame kind: Man, of all beings whatever, ſeems by his ſituation and faculties the leaſt formed or qualified for ſolitude and individuality: And for this we have the unanimous ſuffrage of the wiſe and learned in all ages and countries [a]; ſome few only excepted, who, having adopted the gloomy ſyſtem of *Epicurus*, have in conformity to it been led to draw human nature in frightful colours, and then to ſhew the picture in a diſadvantageous light. A ſenſe of the wants by which they found themſelves preſſed, and experience of the dangers to which they lay open and expoſed in a ſeparate ſtate, put men upon giving this natural bent of their diſpoſition it's proper direction and force, by uniting them in bodies, and forming them into ſocieties; as well for mutual ſupport [b], as common defence [c]: And as it was impoſſible for theſe to ſubſiſt, but under certain regulations, and without rules and orders to curb exceſſes in particular members; ſo this conſideration induced them to ſubmit to ſome neceſſary reſtraints, and introduced the ſalutary proviſion of laws [d]: Whether the heads of particular families might not, at the firſt, maintain a

[a] φύσει ἡ ὈΡΜΗ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν. *Ariſtot.* de repub. L. I. c. 2.
Vid. *Cic.* de offic. I. 4. III. 5.
——— de fin. III. 20. V. 23.
Grot. de jure bell. & pac. prolegom. § 6, 7, 8.
Hooker eccleſ. polit. B. I. 10.

[b] *Plato* de repub. L. II, p. 369. Edit. *Serran.*

[c] *Id.* in *Protagor.* p. 322.

[d] *Cic.* de leg. I. 5.
Grot. prolegom. 8.

kind of ſovereignty within thoſe little communities, is not very material to inquire; and, for ſeveral reaſons, it is natural to imagine ſomething like this to have been the caſe: But when their deſcendants being grown up, and branched off from the original ſtock, began to multiply and ſpread upon the earth; and to lay the foundations of thoſe great empires, that owed their increaſe and grandeur to ſuch ſmall beginnings; it then became neceſſary for them to look out for ſome other ſource of dominion, and to have recourſe to different terms of union; eſpecially as the influence of paternal authority, whatever the extent of it might before have been, underwent all along a gradual diminution.——As to any pretenſions to a right to govern and controul at will, derived, in conſequence of a divine authority, to ſome one of their ſucceſſors above the reſt: Theſe phantoms of viſionary politicians; this incenſe offered by ignorance or adulation to pride and ambition, hath in reality no better title to plead in it's favour than long poſſeſſion, and the preſcription of rude and ſuperſtitious ages: The ſource of ſuch an *abſolute*, *unalienable right*; to all unprejudiced inquirers hath ever been as indiſcoverable, as of old the head of *Nile* to travellers: Since, if any where, it muſt appear by ſome ſpecial deſignation and appointment of the great Sovereign of the univerſe; which, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, would have been made in terms ſo clear and expreſs, as to leave no room for cavil or diſpute as to their meaning and extent: Or, however, we might expect to diſcover evident traces of it in the government of that particular people, in whoſe polity GOD was pleaſed immediately and viſibly to interpoſe; but whoſe hiſtory, it is very remarkable, of all others upon record, the leaſt favours ſuch a groundleſs notion and chimerical claim.

How

How plain ſoever the univerſal law of our nature points out the road to ſociety, and we find obedience to it's ordinances enforced by ſubſequent manifeſtations of the divine will; yet neither the one, nor the other, hath tied men down, and confined them to particular modes and forms of government: Abuſes, at one time or other, have inſinuated themſelves into all; and tyranny hath been ſeen to erect it's head at *Athens*, as well as in *Aſia*: That regimen, upon the whole, bids faireſt for ſtability and duration, which falls in with the leading notions, manners, and intereſts of particular communities[e]; and ſuch, upon inquiry, will be found generally to have taken place in the world: Which probably gave riſe to an obſervation, that hath been ſometimes made; that extremes in government have ever held a conformity to extremes in climate[f]: While nations planted in moderate latitudes, have as naturally run into conſtitutions of a milder aſpect, and more equal temperament. Thoſe uſages which are eſtabliſhed in any country by ancient tenure, and have approved themſelves in practice by an uniform effect; are beſt calculated to promote the true and *ultimate end* of ſociety; which is manifeſtly public emolument, and the good of the whole.

To contend for any *other* end in the inſtitution of government, to advance a doctrine repugnant to this; is abſurd, is impious: Since men could never be ſuppoſed to relinquiſh their natural rights, or give up any ſhare of that freedom to which they were born; but in order to have it protected, and better ſecured to them:

[e] L' eſprit des Loix. L. I. c. 3.
——— L. XIV. c. 1. 2.

[f] L' eſprit des Loix. L. V. c. 15.
Temple of government.

Senſible of the inconveniencies they felt in a ſtate of nature, by every one becoming both judge and executioner in his own cauſe, they were glad to take refuge in ſociety, and wiſely ſubmitted to the deciſion of equal laws, and impartial judges:—And *ſuch* were the founders of thoſe ſtates, that ſtand diſtinguiſhed in hiſtory for the juſtneſs and regularity of the plan, upon which they were formed; or equity of the adminiſtration by which they were conducted: A ſuperiority of parts, and capacity for preſiding; the φύσις ἡγεμονικὴ [g], as it was termed by the ancients; was ſo conſpicuous in theſe lawgivers of former times, as not to lie concealed even from vulgar eyes, and the admiration of the *many*; to whom they approved themſelves friends and benefactors, by introducing to them uſeful arts, and wholeſome diſcipline: Theſe were, *of old men of renown* [h]; reſpected and honoured in their generation while living; and after death immortalized by grateful poſterity.

And from hence it is we diſcern that order and harmony, ſo viſible in the general frame and conſtitution of nature; and neceſſarily reſulting from the ſubordination of powers, and diverſity of talents, diſpenſed unto mankind by the great Author and Beſtower of them: For while ſome are fitted only for ſervile offices; born but to break the clod, and ſhare, with the ox they drive, the labour and the produce of the field; there are others, whoſe *ſtrength*, in the language of the prophet, *is to ſit ſtill* [i]; calmly and diſpaſſionately to mark the ſprings of human actions with their genuine effects and conſequences, to retard or quicken the purſuits, to civilize and poliſh the manners of mankind; and, by the purity and wiſdom of their inſtitutions, to exalt a reaſonable nature to the higheſt degree of perfection attainable by it.

[g] *Plutarch.* in vit. *Lycurg.* [h] *GEN.* VI. 4. [i] *ISAI.* XXX. 7.

Such

Such as *theſe* have been the reflections of men, who, at different times, have wrote and reaſoned beſt upon civil combinations; and ſuch, if we may form a judgment from the few remains that are preſerved to us of the work, or rather from the general tenor of his writings; were the ſentiments of the great father of *Roman* ethic, as well as *Roman* eloquence on this head: And, indeed, if we conſider the important and intereſting nature of the ſubject, the public character and conduct of the writer; or, laſtly, the ſingular regard paid to theſe pieces by ſome of their beſt and wiſeſt emperors; there are perhaps none of his works, the loſs of which we ſhould have greater reaſon to lament, than his treatiſes on government [k].

There hath been occaſion to obſerve, that principles of civil polity have not always run in one channel, nor kept an uniform courſe; and a general cauſe of this variation, deduced from the genius or ſituation of different people and climates, hath already been pointed out: Farther than this, reſearches into the origin of particular ſtates will ſcarce repay the pains of a laborious inquiry: Immediate preſervation is the leading principle in political, as well as natural life; and, in conſequence of it, we find the infancy of government, ever to have been more ſollicitous about gaining an eſtabliſhment, than recording it's original: Clear and diſtinct accounts of tranſactions in ſociety are not to be expected, till, by the indulgence of leiſure from more neceſſary concerns, letters and arts have been introduced, and made ſome progreſs in it; which is a circumſtance altogether unknown to the firſt ſtages of being; and indeed no inconſiderable advances

[k] Non alia magis legebat quam de officiis Ciceronis, & de republica. *Ael. Lamprid.* in vit. *Sever.*

in either are required to extract order from confuſion, and to diſcover conſiſtency in broken and imperfect tradition.

THE accounts that have come down to us of our *Britiſh* anceſtors, both before, and for ſome time after the *Roman* invaſion; are far from giving us an advantageous idea of their manners, neither are they diſtinguiſhed in them by very favourable appellations:[1] Two things however there are, which, rude and unpoliſhed as they were, they have been left in the quiet and undiſturbed poſſeſſion of; an exceſſive paſſion for their liberties, and an undaunted reſolution to maintain and defend them: As to the little culture, and the few traces of humanity, afterwards to be diſcerned among them; the hiſtorians, pointed at above, have been liberal enough in aſcribing to their own countrymen the reputation and credit of theſe: The principal caution therefore to be obſerved in diſquiſitions of this kind, is to fix upon ground, where we may tread ſure; to take our obſervations from thence, and make the beſt diſcoveries, we are able, of objects, that lie ſcattered in the boundleſs tract of time, that hath been before us.

And *ſuch*, with regard to *Britain*, is that memorable æra; in which it ſuffered a change, not only of government, but even in it's very inhabitants and ancient poſſeſſors; by the influx of the *Saxons*, and other neighbouring nations.—As we derive, in great meaſure, our original from this race of people; ſo we date, upon the ſureſt foundation, our liberties from thoſe principles of civil polity, that travelled hither with them; by which they had been long diſciplined to pay obedience only to ſuch laws, as had received the ſanction of public and national councils; in which, it

[1] *Caeſ.* de bel. *Gal.* L. IV. V. *Tacit.* annal. L. XIV. *Id.* in vit. *Agricol.* *Dio Caſſ.* in *Nerone*, p. 173. Ed. *Steph.*

is

is certain, the people bore a conſiderable part; and to acknowledge ſubmiſſion only to ſuch governors, as conſented to make theſe laws the rule and meaſure of their authority among them. [m] Something of the ſame ſpirit we find to have exerted itſelf in the eſtabliſhment of all thoſe northern kingdoms, that were founded pretty near the ſame time with our own; and upon the decline and diſſolution of the *Roman* empire.

Theſe *Gothic* inſtitutions of government, it is true, have been ſince enlarged, and, according to the genius of our country, have received very conſiderable additions and improvements: The outlines of this plan have not only been filled up, but even the laſt and finiſhing hand hath been put to the piece. However from theſe rude materials, and upon this rough foundation, hath been raiſed a model of government; allowed indeed, by the ableſt judges of antiquity, to be the beſt contrived and diſpoſed, the moſt perfect of all others [n]; but, at the ſame time, ſuch as was ſuſpected rather to look plauſible and inviting in theory, than to be capable of actual execution: A ſyſtem, compoſed of the ſeveral kinds and forms of civil polity, ſo tempered and moulded into one maſs; as, at once, to partake of the advantages belonging to *all* the different forms, without being liable to the defects or inconveniences peculiar to, and inſeparable from *each*: A

[m] *Tacit.* de mor. *German.* paſſim. *Caeſ.* de bel. *Gal.* L. VI. *Bacon*'s hiſtor. and polit. diſcourſe, &c. *Dio Caſſius*, in the life of *Severus*, ſays of the *Britons* too, δημοκρατοῦνταί τι ὡς πλήθει; p. 339.

[n] Μοναρχία τοίνυν ξευχθεῖσα μὲν ἐν γράμμασιν ἀγαθοῖς, οὓς νόμους λέγομεν, ἀρίστη πασῶν τῶν ἓξ. *Plato* Politic. p. 302, 303. *Id.* de leg. L. IV. p. 710. Vid. *Plutarch.* Tom. II. p. 827. Edit. Francofurt. (Βασιλείαι) τυραννικαὶ μὲν οὖν διὰ τὸ τοιοῦτόν εἰσιν, ἀσφαλεῖς δὲ διὰ τὸ πάτριαι, καὶ κατὰ νόμον εἶναι. *Ariſtot.* de repub. L. III. c. 14. *Id.* L. IV. c. 10. 11. de mor. L. VIII. c. 12.

Statuo eſſe optimè conſtitutam rempublicam, quae ex tribus generibus illis, regali, optimo, et populari confuſa modicè, &c. *Cic.* Fragment. de repub. II. Ed. Olivet. III. p. 527.

De' diſcors. L. I. c. 2, *Machiav.*

 ſyſtem,

ſyſtem, where not only the *orders* of government are perfect, but the *powers* likewiſe, with which each eſtate is ſeparately veſted, are ſo accurately adjuſted, and ſo equally diſtributed; as to check and controul, without croſſing upon, or interfering with each other.

It is this mixture of forms, and regular diſpoſition of the ſeveral parts of government, that gives our own inſtitution a preference to all others, ancient or modern, that have been planned by human invention; and which (if we may rely upon authority of eminence) hath preſerved it entire, as to eſſentials, thro' the government of no leſs than five ſeveral nations in this iſland [o]: It is undoubtedly owing to this happy temperament, and fair proportion; that *Britain* is at this hour (and may it long continue to be ſo) the ſeat of liberty, the nurſe of arts, and manſion of plenty; that the conſtitution of it's government is the boaſt and glory of *Engliſhmen*, and, very juſtly indeed, the admiration and envy of the world beſide [p]: And if the preſage (ſo famous in ſtory) of the *Pythian oracle*, when addreſſed to, and conſulted by the *Spartan Legiſlator*; could ever be applied with juſtice and propriety to any ſet of perſons, it is certainly applicable to thoſe wiſe heads, and upright hearts, that carried our preſent plan of government into execution; thro' ſo many difficulties, and under ſo many diſcouragements: And the preſage was, in effect, this, "That the government to be inſtituted, ſhould be the moſt perfect that could poſſibly be framed; and the people who preſerved the integrity and ſpirit of it, the moſt happy and flouriſhing; that ever had been, or ſhould be upon earth." [q]

[o] *Forteſcue* de laudibus legum *Angliae*. C. XVII.

[p] L'eſprit des Loix. L. XX. c. 6.
——————— XI. c. 5, 6.

Conſiderations ſur les cauſes de la grandeur des *Romains*, &c. C. VIII.

[q] *Plutarch.* in vit. *Lycurg.* p. 42.

BUT

BUT how miſerable the change from theſe pleaſing proſpects, and this agreeable ſcene, (the more agreeable no doubt for being laid in our native ſoil;) to tread for a while in rough and uneven paths, and often without a guide; and to wander thro' all the wilds of anarchy and confuſion: To behold even this well-compacted frame of government diſſolved, and the utmoſt effort of human policy, at once, defeated; and ſtill farther to be the melancholy witneſſes of the vileſt uſurpation being erected upon the ruins of it, and the moſt oppreſſive tyranny, under which this nation ever groaned, exerciſed over an infatuated people, under the ſpecious pretence of preſerving them from ſlavery.

Excluſive of the ſituation, in which the unhappy Prince (whoſe ſad fate *this day* brings to our remembrance) was left as to his connections abroad; there were beſides, at his acceſſion to the throne, appearances, that had no very favourable aſpect towards peace and harmony at home: The ſtorm had, for ſome time before, been gathering; that afterwards burſt with ſo much fury upon the nation; and it is notorious, that the preceding reign ſupplied fuel in abundance to that pile, in which the prerogative of the crown, and liberties of the people expired together.—Some violent and unjuſtifiable ſteps, that are well known to have been taken pretty early by the king; however he might be preſſed to them by his neceſſities, or puſhed on by the opinions of thoſe, who ought to have known, and adviſed better; were, upon the whole, but little calculated for allaying the jealouſies, and diſſipating the fears; that his ſubjects had before conceived, (and not without ſome colour and foundation) of an intention to invade their juſt rights: Theſe ill-

timed

timed and ill-concerted meaſures contributed, as of courſe they muſt, to widen the breach already made, and, at length, to increaſe the diviſions between him and his people to ſuch a height; that they became, or, in the management of unſkilful hands, were ſoon rendered incapable of being healed by ſafe and gentle applications: The redreſs, that, thro' ſome means or other, had not been procured by thoſe weapons, which the conſtitution had put into the hands of the ſubject; it was now determined, ſhould be effected in another way; and the ſucceſs of the attempt, at all adventures, be left to the deciſion of the ſword.

But how violent and unjuſtifiable ſoever, the meaſures of the court are repreſented to have been *before* the breaking out of the war; yet certainly thoſe meaſures are leſs juſtifiable, which, from that time, were purſued by the oppoſers of the court: For the more ample the conceſſions were, that, from this fatal period, were made by the crown; the higher, in proportion, the demands of the ſubject aroſe: And ſome conceſſions, we are ſure, were made on the part of the former, even in points, which, before and ſince, have *ever* been allowed to be the attributes of prerogative; that might have ſatisfied a reaſonable and well-intentioned oppoſition; that the cauſe of *liberty* was far from being ſo deſperate, as was apprehended; and that the injudicious conduct, which the king held in public affairs; proceeded rather from unhappy prejudices, and miſtaken notions of government in which he had been brought up; and was daily confirmed by the flattery, the folly, or private views of particular perſons about him; than from any deſign to overturn a conſtitution, which he gave ſome very convincing proofs, that he valued and loved. —— It was owing to a ſpirit of party at firſt, and to the ambitious

ambitious views of a faction afterwards; that theſe ſoftening conſiderations had not that attention paid to them, which their importance deſerved: And both theſe events were foreſeen, lamented, and condemned by ſome; who, at the beginning of the troubles, engaged on the popular ſide from conſtitutional principles, and a ſpirit of patriotiſm; and whoſe intention it undoubtedly was as little, as it could be their intereſt, to attempt an innovation in the eſtabliſhment.

By this time, our conſtitution as well in church, as ſtate, was brought almoſt to the laſt gaſp; thro' the wounds it had received from the open and avowed enemies of both: *The whole head was ſick, and the whole heart faint* [1]: Inſtead of that grave and venerable order of men, highly reſpectable on account of their learning, as well as their piety; who had long preſided with reputation and dignity in the former; there aroſe from the midſt of the people, ſome even of the meaneſt and moſt illiterate among them; who ſet up for guides, and teachers of religion to others: And mean and illiterate as theſe men undoubtedly were; yet they did not ſcruple to aſſume authority, and exact a deference in matters of a ſpiritual nature: And ſuch was the infatuation of the times, that the deluded multitude *made unto themſelves, even of the loweſt of theſe, prieſts of the high places* [2]. In the room of a decent and edifying ſervice, formed upon a primitive plan, and approved by daily uſage; ſcarce any thing was to be heard, or ſeen, in thoſe that were called religious aſſemblies; but the cant of fanaticiſm, or the wild and extravagant ſallies of an enthuſiaſtic zeal.—— To omit inſtances of a much deeper dye: Even in this very place from which I am ſpeaking; the *perpetual covenant* [3] to be inſti-

[1] *ISAI.* I. 5. [2] 2 *KINGS* XVII. 37. [3] *JER.* L. 5.

tuted between GOD and his people, was made the groundwork and platform of the *ſolemn league*; and the pretended deliverance to be effected for the nation, by very unhallowed inſtruments indeed; was paralleled with *that* of the *Iſraelites*, wrought by the immediate hand of GOD, from *Aegyptian* bondage. Neither could the venerable appearance of a neighbour-ſtructure command awe and reſpect from theſe rude enthuſiaſts; or the ſolemn uſe, to which it had been long appropriated, ſecure it's offices from indignity and inſult.——The diſorders and convulſions in the ſtate, as will always be the caſe, kept pace, at leaſt, with thoſe in the church; and, oppreſſion, rapine, and bloodſhed, were but the preludes to that ſcene of diſtraction and horror; in which was acted the deep, and deplorable tragedy of *this day*.

But after this, had the wearied land reſt; or ſo much as a reſpite from it's troubles, by the dreadful ſhock it had juſt ſuſtained? Was even the appetite of particular men for cruelty and revenge, ſated by the blood of the royal victim, that had been ſacrificed to appeaſe it's rage?——We fear not:——Our annals will tell us quite the reverſe:——Theſe new reformers ſaw like *Solon*, (pardon me for mentioning them together;) another *Piſiſtratus* to ariſe out of their popular plan: And, as it happened at *Athens*, they ſaw the heirs too of the tyrant to fail: But tyranny itſelf ſurvived; and it flouriſhed.——Theſe modellers of ſtates, not content with demoliſhing the outworks of our conſtitution, were for eraſing it even to the very foundations: They aboliſhed, almoſt in an inſtant, two of the *orders* of our excellent government: And the indignity and outrage offered to the *Venerable Aſſembly*, before which I am ſpeaking; the atrocious violation of the privileges of this

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ſacred aſylum of *Britiſh* liberty; the faithful guardian of all that is valuable and dear to us; will never, as long as time laſts, be thought of by *Engliſhmen*, but with the horror and deteſtation it deſerves: And if I may be allowed to apply a ſentiment of the noble hiſtorian, of thoſe times, to the occaſion: "If there were no other brand upon this odious and accurſed civil war, than *that ſingle outrage*; it muſt be moſt infamous and execrable to all poſterity" [u]. —— The new and unheard of impoſitions, proſcriptions, and decimations in the ſtate; heightened by every circumſtance of diſtreſs, that could render them afflicting and grievous: The tyranny alternately exerciſed by the different ſects, that grew out of the ruins of our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, as one, or the other of them happened to take the lead in matters of religion; made even the diſcordant people at laſt unanimous, in deſiring the re-eſtabliſhment of that conſtitution; the loſs of which they had ſo dearly experienced, and (what was not the characteriſtic of thoſe times) with *ſincerity* lamented.

The nobility, and ancient gentry of the kingdom, who had been plundered, long before, of all that was valuable to them; except what they were obliged very carefully to conceal, their entire affection for the old conſtitution of government; had chiefly retired into corners, and ſought ſhelter in the moſt ſecret and diſtant hiding-places: But, *as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves* [w]; *ſo* very many of theſe, when ſtripped of every thing beſide that they could call their own, and under all the diſcouragements of their ſituation; retained, even to the laſt, thoſe unſhaken principles of loyalty and religion, with which they firſt ſet out.

[u] *Clarendon*, VOL. II. B. VII. Fol.

[w] *ISAI.* VI. 13.

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Such was the unſettled, and diſtracted ſtate of the kingdom; when it pleaſed GOD to command the deſtroying ſword into it's ſheath; and to reſtore to us, together with monarchy, our religion, liberties, and ancient laws; even at a time when the ſins of the nation called ſo loud for vengeance, that, ſpeaking as men, we could as little have expected, as we had deſerved ſuch a gracious interpoſition of his providence.

From this ſketch of our national troubles may be ſeen, how injurious the compariſon is, that hath been made between the violence of thoſe times, of which we have been ſpeaking; and the methods taken, at a more recent æra, to aſſert and vindicate our liberties: As in the latter caſe, the attempts, on one part, to oppreſs and enſlave us, were more undiſguiſed and avowed; ſo the meaſures concerted, on the other, for redreſs, were more deliberate and conſtitutional; and the ſucceſs with which they were attended, muſt juſtify to all men, at leaſt, the prudence and caution with which they were taken:——But if we ſuffer ourſelves to reflect, with how high an hand the fences of our conſtitution were *then* broke down, and the ancient landmarks of it removed; how reſolute an attempt was made, (in violation of all ties divine and human;) to introduce *even* an idolatrous religion, in the place of a pure and reformed worſhip; and to ſubſtitute arbitrary will, in the room of juſt and equal laws; (or, if *any* laws had been left us, it was eaſy to foreſee that, like thoſe of *Draco*, they would have been wrote in blood, and not in ink:) If we allow ourſelves leiſure to reflect coolly and diſpaſſionately on theſe facts; the ſons of freedom will want no farther inducement, to pay a grateful regard to the memory of thoſe *worthy patriots*; who determined, rather than they would ſurvive

ſurvive our conſtitution, to periſh in the ruins of it; and if it was not permitted them to *live* freemen and proteſtants, bravely reſolved, at leaſt, to *die* ſuch:——By which patriot ſpirit, our conſtitution hath been brought nearer to thoſe original principles, from which it had manifeſtly ſwerved; and, by the ſucceſſion to the throne, graffed on the happy event alluded to; a ſurer foundation hath been laid of the liberty and proſperity of the ſubject, than at any other period of our hiſtory: *One* of which, according to the courſe of human affairs, we cannot be deprived of, but thro' our indolence, or by our vices; and the *other*, cannot even be wreſted from us without our conſent, and unleſs we become accomplices to our own ruin.

BUT I will treſpaſs no farther upon your patience, than while I lay before you a few reflections, that naturally ariſe, as well from my ſubject, as the ſolemnity that hath given occaſion to it.

This day is not only *a day of trouble*, but *of rebuke* too [x]; and calls upon us to expoſtulate, in the language of the prophet, to his own people: *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth, and ſeventh month, even* all thoſe years, *did ye at all faſt unto me*, ſaith the Lord [y]? Have we made that prudent uſe of this inſtitution, for which it was deſigned by the wiſdom and piety of our anceſtors, and which indeed is the beſt reaſon for the continuance of it; by improving the opportunity it affords, and the reflections it ſuggeſts, to ſuch good and uſeful purpoſes; as to be found not only better ſubjects, but better *Chriſtians* for them?——Let us conduct ourſelves with ſuch temper, moderation, and candour, as may convince the world; that our ſo-

[x] *ISAI.* XXXVII. 3. [y] *ZECH.* VII. 5.

lemn obſervance of *this day* proceeds neither from a ſpirit of party, nor the violence of faction; but from upright principles, and an inviolate attachment to our conſtitution: On the other part, have *all* thoſe, who differ from us in their ſentiments, been careful to obſerve that conduct, which became wiſe men, and good ſubjects upon this occaſion? Have we not heard of indignity and inſult being offered, not only to the memory of the unfortunate prince, but even to the authority of the legiſlature itſelf, by the moſt indecent and ſenſeleſs efforts? Whilſt thoſe, who are at ſo much pains to point out errors in his public capacity, might be better employed in copying ſome of his many perſonal virtues; which certainly were as great and extraordinary, under the ſevereſt trials, and even in the laſt ſcene of diſtreſs, as ever adorned and exalted a private character; and gave reaſon for thinking, that as they contributed to make him confeſſedly one of the beſt of men; ſo almoſt in any other times, and with a proper direction even in theſe; they would have made him one of the beſt of kings too.——Without inquiring into the immediate cauſes of our civil commotions, or entering into the preciſe merits of the diſpute on either ſide; nothing certainly ought to hinder an unanimous concurrence, in lamenting the fatal conſequences that enſued upon them.——Let the remembrance of theſe times be a caution to men of all principles, how they partake in the councils, or aſſiſt in the enterprizes of ambitious and deſigning men; leſt they ſhould be inſenſibly led on ſo far, as to make a retreat not only difficult, but even dangerous to them: And let the ſame conſideration engage them, rather to make allowance and abatement for ſuch imperfections, as neceſſarily cleave to all human inſtitutions; than to be fond of indulging, upon every turn, a ſpirit of change and innovation: The *beginning of* our national troubles was, no doubt, *as when one letteth*

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out water [z]. Farther occaſions might be given, by degrees, for jealouſy and diſtruſt: The overflowings of theſe ſwelled the ſtream, till it became a river; and the river became a ſea: when the mercileſs element overwhelmed prince and people, the whole veſſel of ſtate, in one general and undiſtinguiſhable wreck.

AS the view we have taken of the *Engliſh* conſtitution, naturally inſpires us with the warmeſt affection for it; ſo it ſhould animate our endeavours, to fix it upon a ſolid and laſting foundation: And *ſuch*; whether we conſult the opinion of writers, ancient or modern, who have turned their thoughts towards civil polity; the experience of former ages, or the interpoſition of Providence in the occurrences of particular ſtates; will appear to be laid *only* in principles of religion and virtue [a]. —— But I am happily prevented from enlarging on this head, by the gracious advice that hath been tranſmitted to us from the throne; which ſhews our Sovereign not to be wrapped in that apathy, in which the *Stoics* of old cloathed their divinities; but, like the tender father of his people, to be more ſollicitous about *their* welfare and proſperity; than intent upon his *own* eaſe: He hath glorioufly pointed out the cauſes, by which other nations have fallen from greater heights, than thoſe, to which our own hath yet arrived: — *Rome*, in the career of it's glory, conquered *Aſia*; but was ſubdued by the luxurious manners, and enervating habits of the eaſt [b]: The ſtates of *Greece* fell ſucceſſive victims to the ſame dange-

[z] *PROV.* XVII. 14.

[a] *Plato* de leg. L. IV. p. 712.
——— de repub. L. II. p. 380.
——— Hip. major. Tom. III. p. 284.
Πρῶτον δὲ, τὴν περὶ τὸ ΘΕΙΟΝ ἐπιμέλειαν. *Ariſtot.* de repub. L. VII. c. 8. 9. De' diſcors, L. I. 2. 11. 12. *Machiav.*

[b] Conſiderations ſur les cauſes de la grandeur des Romains, &c.—C. V.

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rous foe; and even *Athens* is obſerved to have dreaded in *Philip*, not ſo much an enemy of it's liberty, as it's pleaſures[c]. —— The affluence, which our country, by the favour of heaven, lately enjoyed; even at a time, when it dealed out it's largeſſes with ſo ſparing an hand to the nations around us; demands, if any occaſion ever did, the warmeſt returns of national gratitude: And theſe will always be beſt expreſſed, by the uſe that is made of national bleſſings: But have we not been witneſſes to *ſuch miſapplication* of the gifts of Providence, as, at once, inſults the wants of our fellow-creatures, and mocks the bounty of our Creator; as if man were not, in truth, a dependent, and accountable being; but *the earth* was his, *and the fulneſs thereof*[d]. —— The fertility of our ſoil, the extent of our commerce, and advantages of our ſituation; are not all ſufficient to ſhield us from the ſtroke of that avenging arm, which *maketh a fruitful land barren, for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein*[e]: And can thoſe, who have made a laviſh uſe, and profuſe waſte of the bleſſings of Providence, have cauſe to complain; if by a turn in the tide of fortune, (from which nations are no more exempt, than private men;) they ſhould be reduced to eat the *bread of adverſity*, and to drink the *water of affliction*[f]?

LASTLY. Let us avail ourſelves of the advantages, that our preſent ſituation affords; in which we have the happineſs to find the principles of our conſtitution, not only more fixed, and better underſtood; but maintained in greater purity, than in the times that have been referred to: Every motive, either

[c] L'eſprit des Loix. L. III. c. 3.
[d] 1 *COR.* X. 26.
[e] *PSAL.* CVII. 34.
[f] *ISAI.* XXX. 20.

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of a public or private nature, that can poſſibly ariſe; calls upon us to make the reign of his preſent Majeſty, as eaſy and unmoleſted to him; as, by his unwearied attention to the good of his people, his government is rendred ſafe and happy to his ſubjects.——The weight of empire, at all times, is great; and the cares that encompaſs a throne, make it leſs the mark of envy, than the ambitious and vain are tempted to think it: And to add to the ſcale; the *greateſt* monarch is not more exempt from calamities, incident to domeſtic life; than the meaneſt of his ſubjects: how large a proportion of theſe hath fallen to the lot of the *beſt*; very recent inſtances afford a melancholy proof.

We have ſeen, with a concern that well becomes us, our Sovereign ſtripped of bleſſings, that were moſt valuable and dear to him; the delight and comfort of every age, but the ſupport and ſtay of declining years: We have ſeen too the ſtrokes, ſevere as they were, to follow each other ſo cloſe; as if it was ordained, that the character of the *man* ſhould be acknowledged, upon repeated trials, as perfect as *that* of the *king*; and the paſſive courage of the *chriſtian*, was to be as exemplary and diſtinguiſhed, as the valour and heroiſm of the *prince*.——Be it our principal ſtudy, (by every inſtance of duty that loyal ſubjects, and a grateful people can expreſs;) to ſooth and alleviate thoſe diſtreſſes, which it is out of our power to remove; to ſhew how deeply we ſympathize in every misfortune that toucheth our King; and how fully we are convinced, that He *deſerves* thoſe titles of popularity and eſteem, which other princes have *affected*; and that the juſtice of his claim to them, is engraved in indelible characters on the *hearts*, and in the *affections* of his ſubjects.

LET all, who wiſh well to the cauſe of liberty and proteſtantiſm, unite in their prayers for the preſervation of that *important life*; upon which, under heaven, the great ſecurity to both depends: May the all-wiſe Diſpoſer of events be graciouſly pleaſed to grant, that the heirs to the crown of our Sovereign, formed by his precepts, and animated by his example, may inherit his virtues and glory; and that having adorned an earthly diadem with thoſe graces, that give it the brighteſt and moſt durable luſtre; when He ſhall be *gathered (full of days and honour) to* his *fathers* [g]; He may at length obtain *a crown of life* [h].

[g] *JUDGES* II. 10. 1 *CHRON.* XXIX. 28. [h] *REV.* II. 10.

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THE END.